

# **Healing Factors for the Social Organism**

## **Knowledge as a Source of Healing**

**By Dr. Rudolf Steiner**

### **Lecture 1**

What holds good for people today as an almost undisputed authority is science; science in the sense in which it is pursued in the educational institutions of the country. We have often spoken of how far the validity of science can go, and it has also been pointed out that people today must free themselves from its authority. I want now to show how it has become a characteristic phenomenon — but only of the last three or four centuries — to regard medicine as one of these sciences which hold sway as authorities. Indeed, everything connected with medicine is just one science among others — a science the effects of which are intended to bring about the healing of the sick. Today it is hardly realised that this relation of medicine to the other sciences, and to the whole field of knowledge, has come about only during the last three or four centuries. For the further back we go in human evolution the more do we find how everything that

could be cultivated by man in the way of science, of knowledge, was considered to be more or less of a medical nature — as having to do with healing. And when we look back to those olden times, particularly to the development then of occult science, we see that with the concept of this occult science, of this body of knowledge, there is always bound up the concept of healing. In any healing, spiritual science was always involved. Thus, at that time it could never have been said: Medicine is one science among many! — In those days when pure intellect was not thought to have any place in occult science it was said In all science, in all knowledge, we must search for what aims at healing the whole human being. — This thought arose in the soul when they spoke.

But now the question necessarily comes up: What was there in those days to be healed? In this age of materialism a man is said to be ill when anything abnormal is noticed in him, either outwardly in his physical functioning or in his behaviour towards the material world. This material concept of illness is indeed, strictly speaking, a product of man's recent evolution, a product of the post-Grecian age. For in the. Greece of that time, where men were more awake and more receptive towards the world than those who came later, there still persisted the concept of illness

— and of the tendency to illness — which prevailed in all ages up to the last two or three centuries B.C. Such matters as these have to be somewhat emphasised in order to be understood and perceived in their real significance. In those olden days people were convinced that all human beings permanently carried within them the seeds of illness. That in reality everyone went about the world with the predisposition to illness, was the prevailing conception. All men needed help at least in warding off illness; they needed healing the whole time — such was the opinion. Perhaps those things can be better understood if this notion of them is compared with one we come across a good deal, particularly now in connection with our social affairs and social demands. Many people today consider themselves called upon to make a stir about what is necessary in social, or other matters, for the future betterment of mankind. What conditions would be were their ideas to be carried out, they picture as a paradise on earth indeed, the realisation of certain ideas is even said to mean the dawn of the millennium. Certainly this may be well meant, though it has its roots in poor understanding and still poorer intelligence. But it may have the effect of merely exciting people in the agitator's way. For what could have a more powerful effect of this kind, particularly in a materialistic age,

than the promise of a paradise on earthy And if besides they are told it will happen before they die, it is highly probable they will support anyone making the promise. Compared with that, anything like the idea of the “Threefold Commonwealth” appears hard indeed, for it does not speak of a paradise on earth but of a social organism in keeping with life — an organism which can really live. Over against the conception which includes this possible paradise on earth, and is supposed capable of bringing men health by putting their ideals into effect merely through improving conditions on the physical plane — over against this way of thinking lies another.

This other way of thinking, which held good in ancient times and had a quite different shade of feeling, I was trying to describe when I said: All human beings, in so far as they live and work on the physical plane, are to a certain extent hampered by the predisposition to sickness, and need constant healing. This conception is founded on what might be expressed thus — that here in the physical world a man is able to deal with the organisations necessary on the physical plane — with his domestic affairs; his rights and so on. But when all this is carried out through his own power alone, when nothing plays a part which has not to do with external institutions, the

physical organism of man becomes more and more unhealthy. Ordinary measures are then quite unable to promote a sound social organism but only one that becomes weaker and weaker. For this to be avoided it is necessary for spiritual life to run side-by-side with the measures taken for the physical world. Then this spiritual life has the effect of paralysing the germs of sickness always being produced in men. All knowledge was worthless for mankind — so it was thought which did not tend to counteract the poison constantly forming in the social organism. The process of cognition is a healing process. It was considered in those olden days that, were knowledge at fault in any particular epoch, the social organism would become sick. Hence, from the first, cognitional power was recognised as a healing force; only in the course of time did the doctor, the teacher, the priest become separate individuals, independent of a leader with knowledge of the Mysteries who was also responsible for the ordering of society as well as being doctor, teacher, priest and so on, All these faculties were originally combined in one man possessing the knowledge which, owing to its particular character, acted as a healing factor for mankind. Later only were they to be differentiated. At that period of human evolution, too, far less attention was paid to individual illness than is the case today. Certainly opinions were

formed about individual cases, but they were not told to the patient for fear of hurting his feelings and horrifying him. On the other hand, the measures taken, drawn as far as possible out of the deep sources of knowledge, were considered a social cure.

Such a conception, it is true, could prevail in its fullness only at a time when a man's attitude to himself was quite different from what it is today. We have frequently spoken of how the intellectualism, that now takes such a prominent place in the acquiring of knowledge, is really, in its present form, only three or four hundred years old. This intellectualism, which sees its ideal in the natural laws perceived through abstract concepts, has little to do with the human personality, I have often described what effect this has. Picture anyone studying science today, any branch of science, in one of the usual centres of learning in the civilised world. The student sits there listening to the lecturer only with his head, with his understanding, his intellect; and he watches experiments being made. In all this very little part is taken by his soul, his heart, his being as a whole. It was very different in the old Mysteries when there was no question of remaining aloof. All that worked on the head, on the intellect, at the same time affected the entire man, laying hold of his heart, soul and will, so

that his whole being could participate. By thinking in the abstract, by the abstract investigation of nature, our very life has become abstract, so much so that today a man hardly possesses the organ capable of seeing rightly what once was bound up with the whole social life of mankind. We have often spoken here about what in past ages of Judaism was called the “fearful, the inexpressible, name of God”, which eventually found utterance in the word “Jahve.” Why did the name inspire fear? It was because through the very power of the sound, the everyday mood of the one who uttered it, his everyday consciousness, was obliterated and another world arose before him. Because it necessitated the withdrawal of the ordinary consciousness, utterance of the word was dangerous. A man actually felt that when this name vibrated through him he was wafted to another world, where everything was different from the physical world, — This is a mood of soul of which people no longer have, nor can have, any notion. For today, a combination of sounds has no such shattering effect.

All this has to do with the constitution of man’s soul and body from which in those times there was more to draw upon than there is now. Today the organic plays the greater part — hunger, thirst, various emotions, desires, the promptings of heart and soul, sympathies

and antipathies. All that arises in this way out of man's organisation is, strictly speaking, part of him as an individual — an individual human ego. In the case of the men of old, in addition to hunger, thirst, and the desires of ordinary life, revelations of the divine arose. They felt in what had to do in this way with their own bodily nature and with their own soul, the presence of God. Who worked in them as well as in nature. What arose in these men of olden times made them capable of seeing in surrounding nature not what we see today but the spiritual. Present-day man is not disposed to allow that the very faculty of perception in those earlier days was different from what it is in man today.

One can certainly understand this prejudice, this assumption that the world was always seen in the way we see it today. For those who want proof in such matters, however, even external facts show clearly that the Greeks themselves — so we need not go far back in man's evolution — saw surrounding nature differently from how we do. To spiritual science with its spiritual vision this is perfectly clear, but the knowledge, thus brought to the surface so vividly through spiritual vision, can be arrived at also through physical facts, if we look, for instance, in Greek literature and notice the use of the Greek word *chloros*. By this they meant green, but curiously

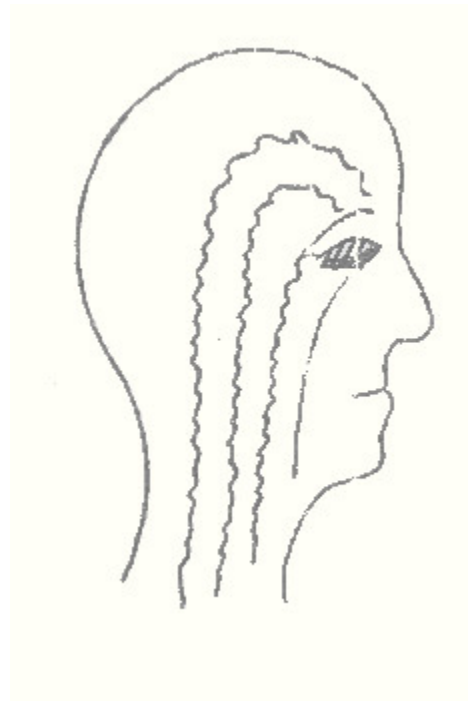


enough they used the same word for golden honey and the golden leaves in autumn; it was also applied to the gold of resin. And the Greeks had a word to describe the darkness of hair, which they used as well when speaking of lapis lazuli, that blue stone. No-one can assume the Greeks had blue hair;. So there is ample proof of such things, from which it can be seen that, as a people, the Greeks were simply incapable of distinguishing yellow from green, and that they did not perceive blue as the colour we do but saw everything tinged with the vividness of red or gold. We find all this confirmed by a Roman writer who speaks of how the Greek painters only used four colours — black, white, red, yellow. Judging from our present theory of colour we must say: The Greeks were essentially blind to the colour blue; they did not see the blue in green but only the yellow. The surrounding world had, for them, a much more fiery aspect, for they saw it all with a reddish tinge. The metamorphoses of human evolution thus affect even the way in which a man sees, and as we have said this is capable of external proof. To spiritual vision it is perfectly clear that the whole colour-spectrum of the Greeks was on the red side — that they had little feeling for the blue and violet. For them the violet was much redder than we see it. Were we, according to our present visual conception, to paint the landscape as a

Greek saw it, we should have to use quite different colours from those we ordinarily do. They had no knowledge of what we see as nature, and the nature they saw is an unknown world to us. The evolution of mankind progresses indeed by metamorphoses. The point is that the time when intellectualism arose and men became inclined to meditation — the Greeks had little inclination that way — they lived objectively in the world of nature — was the time when a feeling was acquired for the dark colours, the blue, the blue-violet. It was not only the inner nature of the soul that was changed, but also what passed over from the soul into the senses.

You can therefore say that today, in this fifth postAtlantean period, we are indeed different men in our sense-faculties from the characteristic men of the fourth period, the Greco-Latin people. This is all connected with what has been said before. During the time when spiritual forces still arose from the emotions, from sympathies and antipathies, even from the body in its hunger, thirst, its satiation, these spiritual forces poured into the sense-organs. And these spiritual forces, streaming up from the lower bodily nature to pour themselves into the sense-organs, are those which play the chief part for the eyes in giving life to the various shades of yellow and

red, enabling these colours to be perceived. The time has now come when the reverse is the most important task for mankind. The Greeks were still organised in such a way that their beautiful world-conception was mediated through their senses, into which flowed their organic life permeated by spirit. In the course of centuries this spirit-filled organic life has been suppressed by men. Out of our soul, out of our spirit, we must infuse it with fresh life; we must acquire the faculty for making our way into soul and spirit — as spiritual science enables us to do. But acquiring this faculty through spiritual science we shall take the opposite direction. In the case of the Greeks the streams came from the body to pour into the eye (see red in diagram I); the reverse must take place with us; we have so to develop soul and spirit that the streams (see blue in diagram I) from the soul and spirit reach the human organisation; and we must receive these streams in the other senses as well as in the eye. The way for mankind in future must be in the reverse direction to that of the middle of the fourth post-Atlantean culture-epoch. Then the reflective man will once again become a knower of the spirit, but in another form, because of what comes to him from above. We have grown to be sensitive to the blue side of the spectrum.



If I wanted to make a diagram L should have to draw it in the following way: The Greek was susceptible to red, lived in red and was familiar with the red part of the spectrum (see left of diagram II). We, however, must grow more and more accustomed to this part (see right of diagram II). But by doing so, and in that we find blue and blue-violet increasingly attractive, our sense-organs have necessarily to undergo change,

The sense-organs must become quite different in their finer structure from how they were. What then gradually pours into the sense-organs in a natural way, develops through the eye, for example. Imagination; through the ear. Inspiration; through the

sense of warmth, Intuition. Thus there must be developed:

through the eye: Imagination,  
through the ear: Inspiration,  
through the warmth-sense: Intuition.

In the course of human evolution the finer structure of man's organisation goes through a metamorphosis, becomes different.

People today must be awake to such things, for they are standing at a momentous cross-roads; it is indeed a time when it has to be decided whether they can take the way enabling them to receive impressions from above. Pure intellectualism does not suffice; we must permeate intellectualism with spirit and soul. Then what develops within us as spirit and soul will work into the human organisation. But what if we do not develop it? When any organ is destined for a purpose for which it is not used, it perishes — is killed. There you have in the human organism itself what a past age, out of the assumptions of the time, accepted for the evolution of mankind. Just consider your eyes — into those eyes must be poured what should stream from above as spiritual life into the people of the future. Should this not come about, the eyes are

doomed to suffer. Through their very nature they must deteriorate; and it is the same in the case of the ears, the same with the sense of warmth, What kind of knowledge then must we look for? A knowledge that will heal our organism of its tendency to sickness. We have to find our way back to perceiving that all knowledge — in so far as it is connected with man should be of a healing nature. We must return to the concept that we have to seek knowledge for this healing virtue, that medicine is not just one science among others, but that in the process of human evolution all knowledge must be a healing factors. This is because human beings all the time need that what arises in them on the physical plane should be healed. The man who promises an earthly paradise is not speaking rightly; he alone tells the truth who makes it clear: When everything has been done to establish good earthly conditions, a man has still to seek his connection with the spiritual world. For even the best conditions on earth need perpetual healing — healing that penetrates right into the human organism, as this, too, is always prone to sickness. In so many words: There must be a spiritual life in men with power to form healing forces out of itself.

Among the many grounds, which, out of the anthroposophical world-conception, have contributed

to giving life to the idea of the “threefold” are those you may gather from what I have been saying today. For this idea of the “threefold” is such that, look where you will in man’s present evolution provided you can observe in the right way — the need for this membering into three is manifest to those who have a faculty for seeking the truth. Those with a little logic who, hearing about this “threefold” idea cannot immediately grasp it, or perhaps find it at variance with some other idea, should wait till they learn more about it. Then they will see that there is not just one proof nor one source alone for proving the necessity for the “threefold”, but that these are numberless. For wherever you look you find instances bearing independent witness to what I might describe as the present necessity for spreading this idea of the “threefold” in our social organism. And one of the most important spheres of all lies in the knowledge and understanding of the being of man himself. But where do we find science — so proud of its abstraction — turning its attention to the concrete? — The Greeks were still distinctly conscious that when they gave rein to their feelings the divine revealed itself to them. And we must acquire the faculty for bringing down spiritual forces of the soul from the spiritual heights; they must reveal nature to us, show us what nature is. In other words we must grow to realise that we cannot

learn to know nature by perceiving it outwardly, but only with sense-organs strengthened by what comes from above — with an eye made keen by Imagination, an ear sharpened through Inspiration, and a sense of warmth through Intuition — that is to say, through selfless experience of the things and processes surrounding us.

Out of the will to heal has science developed.  
Into the will to heal must science return.

What we look upon as science today, showing such veneration for its authority, is only an intermediate state: which state, however, is leading in the social sphere to the most terrible conflict.

We shall continue on this theme tomorrow.

## **Lecture 2, Dornach, 21st March 1920**

It behoves me today to link certain aspects of the knowledge gained from earlier studies — with which most of our friends are already acquainted — to what I said yesterday. But once again I want to draw your attention to the essential content of what we then said, namely, that the knowledge, the passive kind of knowledge cultivated today is in reality a comparatively recent production. This indifferent knowledge, shown for instance when medicine is set



down as just one science among many, has been developed only in course of the last three or four centuries; whereas in olden times the aim of all knowledge was to heal. Knowledge and the finding of means to heal mankind were, in the sense intended yesterday, one and the same.

Now from various indications in my lectures you will know that in the last third of the nineteenth century an event of spiritual importance took place; that during the seventies of that century, behind the scenes of world-history, of outer, physical world-history, something of great significance happened. To have some name for it but another name might do just as well — we have called it the victory of the archangelic Being, Michael, over opposing spiritual forces. We will look upon this as an event taking place in the spiritual World and connected with mankind's history. It is in the spiritual world that such events are prepared. This particular one could be said to be in preparation already in 1842. It reached a certain climax in the spiritual world about 1879, and from 1914 on the necessity arose for men on earth to establish a harmonious relation with this spiritual event. What has been happening since 1914 is essentially a struggle on the part of narrow-minded humanity against what, in the opinion of the spiritual

powers concerned with the guidance of mankind, should come about. Thus we may say: In the second half of the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth, behind the scenes of human evolution, there was taking place something significant — a challenge to men to submit themselves to the will of those spiritual beings. This would entail a change of direction and the bringing about of a new kind of civilisation, a new conception of social life, of the life of art and all spiritual life on earth. In the course of human evolution there have repeatedly been such events, of which external history takes little account. For external history is indeed a fabrication. Things of this kind have nevertheless definitely happened — one of them taking place 300 years, another in the middle of the third millennium, before the birth of Christ.

1842—————1879—————1914

300 B.C.

Middle of the 3rd Millennium

Regarding mankind, however, there was a great difference between the experiencing of these two events and that of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Most of you have at least partly experienced

the events of the second half of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth, and will know that small notice was taken of how a change should actually come about in the spiritual life.

Hardship will compel mankind to realise the necessity for this. There will be no end to hardship until a sufficient number of human beings have realised this necessity — even in the organising of public affairs. We may indeed ask why no notice has been taken, and whether it was the same in the case of those other experiences, the third millennium and the third century. — But no, it was quite different then. Could people only interpret to history of the Greek soul rightly, even that of the more coarse-grained Romans, they would understand that actually both Greeks and Romans were fully aware that something calling for notice was taking place in the spiritual world. Indeed precisely in the case of the event 300 years before Christ's birth, we can quite well see its gradual preparation, how it then reached a climax and lived itself out. The men of the third, fourth century before Christ's birth were clearly conscious: In the world of spirit something is happening that has an echo in the world of men. — What they thus perceived can today be called the birth of human phantasy — man's faculty or imagination.

You see, human beings, as they are constituted today, consider the way they think: and the way they feel to be the same as thinking and feeling have always been. But that is not so. Indeed in the course of time our sense-perceptions have changed — as I showed yesterday. Naturally, three or four centuries before the birth of Christ creative art was already in existence; it did not arise, however, out of what today is called imagination but out of imagination that was clairvoyant. There who were artists could perceive how the spiritual revealed itself, and they simply copied what was thus revealed. The old atavistic clairvoyance, the old imagination, was inherent in the artist. The phantasy which then arose and was developed till, having come to the climax in the works of Leonardo, Raphael, Michelangelo, it started to degenerate — this phantasy did not create as if the spiritual appeared in imaginations, but as if something were ordered from within a man, formed from within him. The gift of this phantasy was ascribed by people at that time to strife among the divine beings ruling over them, at whose orders they carried out their earthly deeds.

In the middle of that third millennium, about 2,500 years before Christ's birth, people perceived as something of still greater significance how their whole

being was involved in the events which, out of the spiritual world, made an impact on physical events. About that time, still in the third millennium before our era, it would have been deemed very foolish to speak of man's earthly pilgrimage without referring to the spiritual beings around him. This would have seemed noneenue to everyone, for then the earth was thought to be peopled by beings both physical and spiritual.

The life of soul that became habitual in the course of the nineteenth century is certainly different from the of those olden days. Men perceived the ordinary secular events on earth but not the underlying, significant spiritual strife. How came it that this was not perceived? — It was the result of the special character of our present age, the age which began in the middle of the fifteenth century and is called by us the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. In our present epoch the most outstanding, significant force of which a man can avail himself is intellect, and since the fifteenth century people have attained to great heights as intelligent beings. Today they still take pride in this. It should not be thought, however, that in earlier times there was no kind of intelligence — it was a different kind, it is true, but it arose at the same time as a certain perception. This intelligence was endowed,

too, with a spiritual content. We, on the other hand, have an intelligence devoid of spiritual content, a formal intelligence; for in themselves our concepts and ideas are empty — they merely reflect something. Our whole understanding is just a mass of reflected images. It is indeed in the nature of this intelligence, which has been particularly developed since the middle of the fifteenth century, to be simply a reflecting apparatus. What is thus merely reflected does not act within man as a force; it is simply passive. And it is characteristic of this intellect — of which we are so proud — to be passive; we just let it work upon us, give ourselves up to it. Very little force of will is developed in it thus. The most outstanding trait in men now is their hatred of intellect that is active. In face of a situation where thinking is required of them — well, they find that very boring. When it is a question of real thinking there is a general dropping off to sleep — at any rate for the soul. On the other hand, with a film, a cinematograph, when there is no need to think and it is thinking that can go to sleep, when all one has to do is to gaze and passively to give oneself up to what is reeled off, so that thoughts run on of themselves, then there is general satisfaction. It is a passive understanding to which men have grown accustomed, an understanding devoid of force. And what in fact is that? We realise its nature when looking

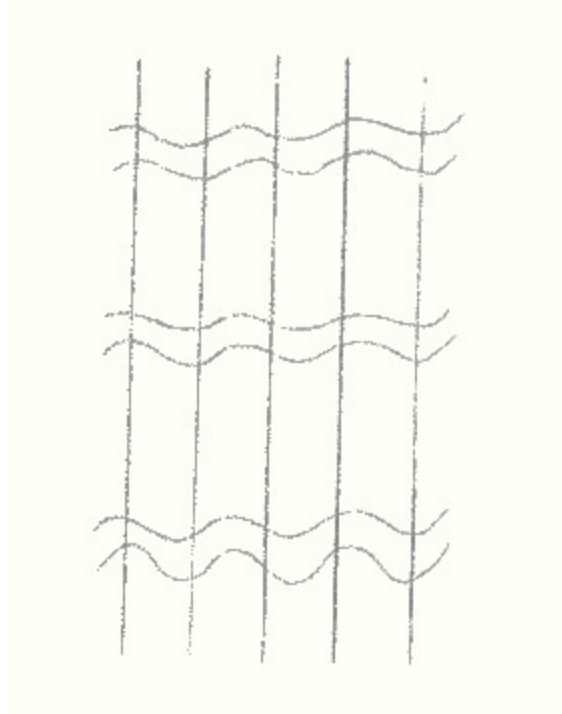
back at the distinction made in human knowledge in the old Mystery schools. There were three categories: first, the knowledge that came from men's physical life, arising out of their common physical experience of the world. Perhaps we could say: First, physical knowledge; secondly, intellectual knowledge, developed by man himself, chiefly in mathematics, knowledge, in effect, in which a man immerses himself — intellectual knowledge; and thirdly, spiritual knowledge, coming from the spiritual and not from the physical. Today, of these three it is intellectual knowledge which is especially cultivated and most in favour. It has become quite an ideal to approach the spiritual life with the passive, unconcerned attitude usually adopted towards mathematics. It is not admitted but all the same true that our present men of learning, for instance our university professors, on leaving the lecture-room like to turn as soon as they can to something quite unconnected with their particular subject. That betrays an abstract relation to knowledge which goes extremely deep.

When I was lecturing in Zurich a few days ago, a workman broke into the discussion. As the Waldorf School and the timetable we have put in place of the usual soul-destroying one had been mentioned, he said: "Your timetable gives too long a stretch for one

subject; there should be more change. For when children have gone on with a subject from eight to nine, if they are not to be bored there ought to be something else from nine to ten.” Naturally I could but reply: “It is not the business of the Waldorf School to deal with boredom but to take care that the children’s interest is kept alive — and that is the concern of the School pedagogics and didactics.” Thus the idea is very deeply-rooted in people that spiritual life is boring, and easily becomes tiresome as a subject. This is entirely because our intellectual life, consisting as it does merely of pictures, of reflected images, can provide no substance for our spiritual life. And a spiritual life devoid of substance is in a state of isolation — cut off not only from the spiritual world but also from the physical. Actually in the age we live in very little is known either of the physical world or that of the spirit. All that a man knows about is his own imaginings. As a result of intellectuality being just so many reflected images, the man of the nineteenth century was debarred from any knowledge of what was going on spiritually behind the scenes of world-history. He had no share in the experience of that great, momentous change which, behind external world history, came about in the spiritual world during the second half of the nineteenth century. It is through his own endeavours that he has to learn how the



physical world should follow the lead of the spiritual world. This lesson is forced upon him, for, if not learnt, increasing hardship will prevail and all present civilisation will go down into barbarism. To avoid this it is necessary for people to be aware inwardly that they must experience something in the same way that, 300 years before Christ's birth, the birth of phantasy was experienced. In our day we have to experience the birth of active intelligence — at that time the active force of imagination arose. At that time it became possible to give imaginative shape to what was created in accordance with external form; now, people must turn to the inward, victorious creation of ideas, through which everyone makes for himself a picture of his own being — setting it before him as a goal. Human beings must acquire self-knowledge in its widest sense, not just by brooding over what they had for dinner, but ,a self-knowledge which sets their whole being in action. That is the kind of self-knowledge demanded for the evolution of those men whose present task is the bringing to birth of an active intelligence.



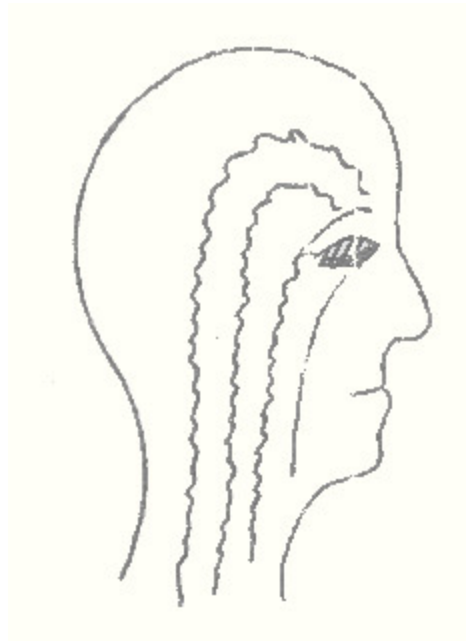
Now, it will happen that human beings in ordinary recollection, in their ordinary memory, will discover something very peculiar. Because people today have become rather insensitive and do not notice what is already in their souls, on looking back over their life they still perceive only memories of their ordinary experiences. But that is not the whole picture; actually a certain change has taken place and more and more people are met with who are having a new experience. When these men look back ten or twenty years they come not only to what they have experienced, but out of that, like an independent entity, there rises something they have not experienced. Psychoanalysis, in its foolishness, examines what thus, lies hidden in the soul examines it without realising the

nature of our present age. What these foolish psychoanalysts are unable to find, spiritual science must propound, namely, that when we look back — say from our 45th year — and watch our experiences surging past like a stream (see diagram), within them there is not only our past experience; it was so once and even today is all that most of our rather thick-skinned generation perceive. But anyone sensitive to such things will realise that in a backward survey of his life he sees not only the ordinary events but something (red in diagram) he has not experienced, arising from the past experiences of his soul in an almost demoniacal way. And this will increase in intensity. If people do not learn to observe such things they will lose the power to understand them.

Therein lies the danger for future evolution, and deluding oneself is of no avail for it is indeed so. Among the experiences lived through by a man something new will appear, only to be grasped by active intelligence. This is extraordinarily important. Just as in the individual human being something new arises after the change of teeth, then again at puberty, and so on, after a certain period the same kind of metamorphosis occurs in mankind as a whole. This present metamorphosis can be described as follows — if we look back occasionally on our life (and

this can also be done in the backward survey over our day) we do not only remember the most obvious experiences, but out of these surge up demonic forms. It almost causes us to say: I have had certain experiences out of which daydreams arise. — This will be quite normal but we have to be alive to it. It will call for much more inward activity on men's part and the overcoming of that passive attitude which promotes despair in face of the great demands of the age. That passivity must be overcome. People's sleepiness, their inability to rouse themselves and to take things with dignity and in earnest, is certainly terrifying. I have already spoken here of how in our day many people cannot even be angry. Anyone incapable of getting angry over what is bad is incapable of enthusiasm over what is good. When, however, active intelligence takes possession of human beings there will be a change. We may indeed say that they are still afraid of the discovery they will then make. For with the coming of active intelligence they will recognise their cherished intellectuality for what it is — recognise the real nature of these arising images. This can be understood only if we remember something I have often mentioned here — that we can feel, we can will, just being alive; but just being alive does not enable us to think. That, we cannot do. We

are able to think only by bearing permanently within us the principle of death.



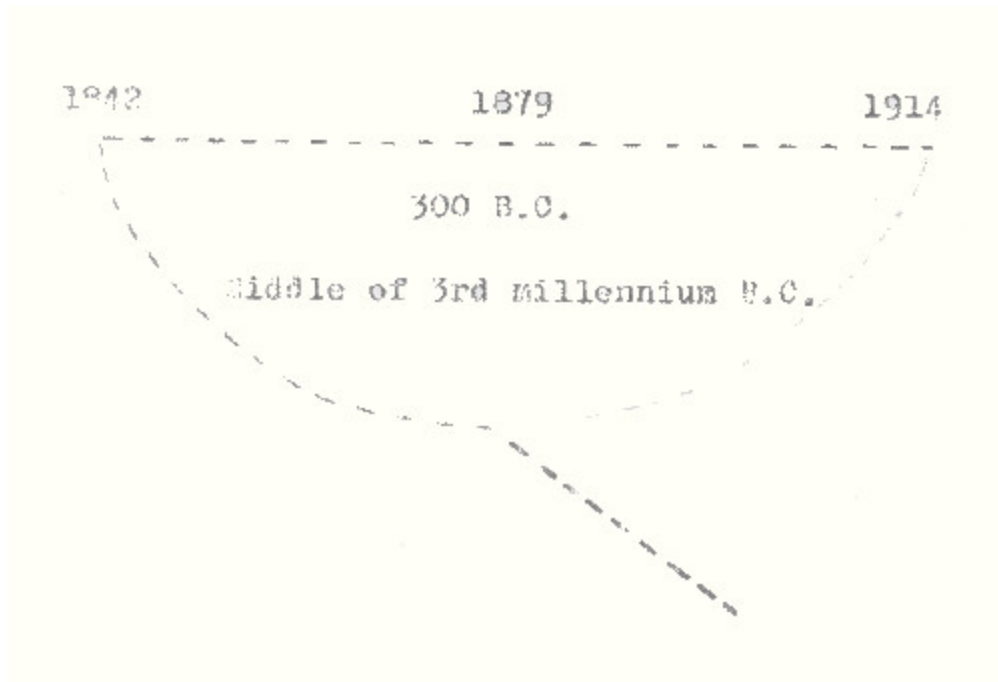
This great secret about mankind lies in there being a never-ending stream, as it were, flowing from the senses — let us take the eye as representing them (see diagram). Through what we know as nerve, the senses carry into a man something destructive. It is as if — by way of the nerve-fibres — men were filled through their senses with a crumbling material. When you see, when you hear, even when you are conscious of warmth, there is taking place what like the crumbling of some material on its way inward from the senses. This crumbling material has to be taken hold of by what streams out from within a man; it must be,

as it were, burnt up. Our thinking necessitates a continual struggle against the forces of death in us. Indeed, because he is conscious of his thinking merely in its reflecting capacity, a man does not realise that, strictly speaking, he is alive only in what has nothing to do with his head, his head actually being an organ always in the throes of death. We should be in constant danger of death were merely that to happen which goes on in our head. This permanent dying is checked by the head being united to the rest of the organism, upon which it draws for its vitality. When the human being will have possessed himself of active intelligence as he did of active phantasy in the days of the Greeks and Romans — whereas the imagination of the old atavistic clairvoyance was a passive phantasy — with this active intelligence he will be able to perceive how part of his being is always dying. And this will be important. For just today we have to progress to a state of consciousness enabling us to perceive this permanent dying, so mankind in a past age, even up to the time of the Greeks, perceived what was living in the principle of vitality, in the will and its associated metabolism. What fights against the principle of death, what in a man is continuously disabling that principle of death, is living there, it might be said that in this respect the people of old were superior to those who followed them. They

perceived the vitality with their instinctive clairvoyance, perceived the life with which the principle of healing is connected. Indeed, we do not die because our head has the will to die, but, owing to our head being the organ of thinking, we permanently carry within us the germs of sickness. Thus it is necessary for us to pay the price of our thinking by setting counter to the head, with its tendency to disease, the healing forces lying in the rest of our organism. Today it is still little noticed, but forms of disease are beaming to appear — as you know, they change — in which the constant process of death coming from the head will be more easily noticed than many of our present illnesses. Then it will be found that in reality the whole healing process in human beings is to counteract the harmful effects of our intellectual life. Whereas people of old could claim healing to be in their science, their knowledge, in future it will have to be admitted that what we are now making of our intellect, what is becoming of this intellect, of which today we are so proud, should it alone be held valid, will show us in future the gradual fall of mankind into complete decadence. To avert this, science will have to become able to carry within it the forces of healing. — I indicated this yesterday from another point of view; today I do so more from the standpoint of the way in which man is constituted. We

must recognise that spiritual science is needed as bearer of a new healing process. For if there be a further development of the intellect of which modern man is so proud, intellect which lives merely in images, then by reason of its predominance all men will become disease-ridden. Measures must be taken to prevent such a thing. I can well imagine some people replying: "But if we discourage this intellectual cleverness, if we do away with intellect", — and there are indeed those who would like to see the intellect left undeveloped — "then there would be no need to repair the damage it does." — The true progress of mankind, however, has nothing in common with this Jesuitical principle; rather is it a question of human evolution being such that the healing element developing out of man's soul-forces can have effect on the intellect — otherwise this intellect will take a decadent trend and bring about the downfall of mankind. (See diagram)





As counter-measure to this, what arises from knowledge of spiritual science, and can permanently hinder the forces of decline in the one-sided intellect, must become effectual.

We come here to a point where once again I have to draw your attention to a very special matter. You will certainly realise that during the nineteenth century, when all I am telling you about today — and have frequently pointed out in the past — was taking place, intellectual materialism was assuming great proportions. Men came to the fore — I need only remind you of Moleschott, Vogt, Gifford — upholding, for instance, the proposition: All thinking consists in a metabolism going on in the brain. — They spoke of

phosphorescence of the brain, and said without phosphorus in the brain there is no thinking. According to this thinking is just a byproduct of a certain digestive process in the brain. And the men saying this cannot be written off as being the stupid ones among their contemporaries. We may think how we like about the theory of these materialists but we can just as well do something else: that is, measure their capacity by that of their contemporaries and ask: Were such people as Moleschott and Gifford the cleverer or those who opposed them out of old religious prejudice and without spiritual science? Was Haeckel the cleverer or his opponents? This question may still be asked today. And when it is not answered in accordance with personal opinion, but with regard to spiritual capacity, naturally it cannot be said that Haeckel's opponents were cleverer than he nor that the opponents of Moleschott and Gifford were cleverer than they. The materialists were very clever people, and what they said was certainly not devoid of significance. How then did all this come about? What was behind it? We must indeed find the answer.

Certainly quite well-intentioned opponents of materialism arose at the time, for example Moriz Carriere whom I have often mentioned. Now he said: If everything man thinks and experiences is merely

concocted by the brain, what is propounded by one party is just as much a concoction as what the opposite party says. As far as the truth is concerned there is no difference between a statement of Moleschott or Gifford and what is maintained by the Pope. There is no difference because in both cases they are concoctions of the human brain. There is no way of distinguishing the true from the false. Yet the materialists fight for what appears to them as the truth. They are not justified in doing so but they are astute — capable of a certain quickness of spirit. What then is in question here? You see, these materialists have had to arise in an age when thinking is made up merely of images, lives merely in images. But images are not there without something to act as reflector — which in this case is the brain. Indeed, where ordinary thinking is concerned — the thinking that grew to such heights in the nineteenth century — materialists have right on their side; that is a fact. They are no longer right, however, if they want to maintain that the thinking which transcends that of the intellect is also nothing but images dependent on the body, for that is not so. What transcends the intellect can be acquired only in course of a man's evolution: only by his becoming free of what has to do with the body. The thinking that has come to the fore in the nineteenth century must be explained materialistically. Though

composed of images it is entirely dependent on the instrument of the brain, and the remarkable thing is that, for the most part, in face of the life of spirit in the nineteenth century, materialism is actually justified. That life of spirit is bound up with the bodily and material. It is precisely this life of spirit which must be transcended. The human being must rise above it and learn once more to pour spiritual substance into the images. This can be done not only by becoming clairvoyant — as I constantly emphasise there is no necessity for everyone to be so: for spiritual substance can be made to flow into a man's thinking when he reflects upon what another has already investigated spiritually,,, This must not be accepted blindfold; once there, it can be judged. Commonsense will suffice for the understanding of what has, been investigated through spiritual science. The denial of this means that commonsense is not given its due; and anyone who denies it is thinking: Commonsense — civilised people have been developing a great deal of that for a long time. Indeed these civilised people are developing a “very assured” judgment! And if this assured judgment is refuted by the facts they take no notice, refuse to take notice. At the suitable moment such matters — which speak volumes symptomatically — are forgotten.

I will give you just one nice little example. In 1866, at the time of the Prussian victory over Austria, it was said that this was a proof of the superiority of Prussian schools. It gave rise to the saying: [First said in 1866 by Oskar Peschel — a professor at Leipzig University.] “It was the Prussian schoolmasters who won the 1866 victory.” This has been constantly repeated, and it would be interesting to count the times, between 1870 and 1914, that it was said by the qualified and unqualified — mostly the unqualified: “The Prussian victory was won by the schoolmaster.” — I imagine that people today will no longer be so ready to speak anywhere in such a fashion, any more than the truth of this other assertion will be insisted upon in the light of present events. But in this intellectual age, when people are so clever, they are not willing to notice the contradictions to be found in life. Facts play very little part in the intellectual life, but they must do so if the intellect is to be permeated with fresh spiritual content. Then, indeed, it will be manifest that a paralysing process, a decadent process, is appearing in men, which must be overcome by new spiritual knowledge. In the past: men must be said to have sensed, experienced, something of a healing nature in the knowledge surging up from the physical body. In future they will have to learn to see in the development of intellect the cause of disease, and to

look to the spirit for healing. The source of healing must indeed be found again in science. This necessity, however, will arise from an opposite direction, when it can be seen how external life, even when proficient in knowledge, makes for sickness in men and must be counteracted by the healing principle.

Matters such as these afford us insight into the course of human evolution — in so far as this is a reality. Today history does not give us a real picture of human evolution but merely worthless abstractions. Man today is deficient in a sense of reality, having indeed very little. During the nineteenth century, people in mid-Europe became very proficient at giving out what of a spiritual nature was already there. One of the most arresting examples of this is the case of Herman Grimm who, as a writer about the works of Goethe — such as *Tasso* or *Iphigenie* ranks very high. He was, however, quite unable to portray Goethe the man. Although he wrote a biography of him, in it Goethe seems a mere shadow. Spiritual force was not there in the nineteenth century; people were living in images; and images have no power to enforce the reality which is so necessary for the future. We must understand not only what human beings create, but above all the human being himself, and through him nature, in a more all-embracing sense than hitherto. I

believe it to be possible for such things to work in all seriousness upon the human heart and soul. It is likely to be some time before a sufficient number of people allow themselves to be fired by the knowledge that, if not permeated by the spirit, mankind will be overcome by disease. At least those should accept this knowledge who have come nearer to an understanding of anthroposophy.

There is one thing which must be recognised — that many who have accepted anthroposophy have come to our Movement out of what I might call subtle egoistic tendencies, wishing to have something for the comfort of their souls. They want the satisfaction of gaining certain knowledge about the spiritual world. But that will not do. This is not a matter of basking in the personal satisfaction of participating in the spiritual. What people need is actively to intervene in (tilt) affairs of the material world from out the spirit — through the spirit to gain mastery, over the material world. There will be no end to all the misery that has come upon mankind till people understand this and, understanding, allow it to influence their will.

One would so gladly use — at least among anthroposophists — this kind of insight, this kind of will, taking effect. Certainly it may be asked: What can

a mere handful of human beings do against the blindness of the whole world? — But that is not right. To speak in that way has absolutely no justification. For in saying this there is no thought that what concerns us here is first to strengthen the will-power — then we can await what will come. Let everyone from his own sphere in life do what lies in him; he may then await what is done by others. But at least let him do it — do it above all so that as many people as possible in the world may be moved by the urgent need for spiritual renewal.

Only if we are watchful, and take a firm stand where anthroposophy has placed us, can we ourselves make any progress or set our will to work on what is necessary to ensure the progress of all mankind.